

- ☑ Westover's ramp has record 24 Galaxies (back page)
- ☑ Soldiers get Westover hospitality (back page)
- ☑ Free jazz concert

Briefs

Dining Facility serving breakfast

The Westover Dining Facility has begun serving breakfast every day from 5 to 8 a.m. The charge is \$1.60 for those on per diem.

Midnight meals are served every day from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. and flight meals are available at any time, upon request.

AF Jazz Ensemble to perform locally

The Air Force Ambassadors Jazz Ensemble will perform at the Calvin Theatre, 19 King St., Northampton at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 23. Free tickets are available to see the ensemble, which is part of the Air Force Band of Liberty.

The group performs a jazz ensemble repertoire spanning the past 50 years, including the sounds of the Glenn Miller, Count Bassie and Duke Ellington orchestras. Also featured are the modern sounds of Matt Catingub, Rob McConnel and Matt Harris.

For ticks, send a self-addressed envelope to the Northampton Veterans Services Department, 240 Main St., Room 4, Memorial Hall, Northampton, MA 01060-3113.

Pass & ID hours

On Friday, the Pass and ID office will be closed beginning at 1 p.m.

On Monday, Pass and ID will be open - business as usual. 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. closed from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Pass and ID is located in Bldg. 1520, located on Patriot Avenue.

For more information, call Ext. 2012.

Wheels of Westover keep surge moving

Article and photos
by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

It was just another day at the office for Katrina Bleau, production controller at the 439th Logistics Support Squadron vehicle operations desk. A shuffle of vehicle drivers that bustled in and out of the dispatch office signaled another shift change. The office – the nerve center of the squadron's vehicle section - is where the wheels of Westover begin and end their turns.

"Tango 30, vehicle ops, you're all set," Bleau told the driver. The driver assisted with luggage, and, in this high-tech age, there was something else the aircrew forgot. "Go ahead and pick up the laptop," Bleau told the driver.

The surge of operations at Westover since Feb. 1 has more than challenged the transportation squadron, staffed with reservists and Griffin Services employees.

Most of the nuts and bolts of the LSS vehicle operations section happens right at the dispatch office. "This is the hub," said SMSgt. Marilyn Dube, vehicle operations superintendent.

The numbers are all the proof that's needed. As of March 7 the LSS drivers, staffed by 15 activated reservists, have carried more than 13,000 passengers around the base.



The vehicle dispatch desk is the nerve center of the 439th Logistics Support Squadron's vehicle operations section. From left are, Katrina Bleau, production controller; TSgt. Josh Lambert, chief dispatcher; and SMSgt. Marilyn Dube, vehicle operations superintendent.

The drivers have moved more than quarter of a million pounds of cargo. The demand has forced the squadron to lease several school buses and vans.

Those trips range from transient aircrew pickups on the flight line to taking people back and forth from hotels in western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut.

"We're pretty much a lifeline for those aircrews," said TSgt. Josh Lambert, chief dispatcher. "When they call us up, we deliver it." Lambert said his job title doesn't necessarily describe his day-to-day duties. The chief dispatcher is assigned wherever needed.

SSgt. Christopher O'Brian, a vehicle operator dispatcher, is from Clifton Park, N.Y. He called his squadron the "front line" as Westover's ambassadors. "We're the first ones they see and the last they see here," he said, shortly after he assisted a Travis AFB, Calif., C-5 aircrew with their luggage.

Back at the base, the drivers shuttle hungry troops from Hangar 3 to the dining hall every 15 minutes during the expanded meal hours.

Bleau has worked in the
(continued on next page)



SSgt. Christopher C. O'Brian, vehicle operator dispatcher, assists crew members from Travis AFB, Calif., with their luggage shortly after the pilots and loadmaster landed at Westover.

Wheels... (Continued from page 1)

squadron for three years. The surge has made things the busiest ever for her. "We have five drivers," she said, in between the constant chatter of two-way radio conversation. "Yesterday, we moved 651 people." The pace got so busy that Bleau skipped lunch for a second day in a row.

Augmentees arrived in February to help with the increase in operations. They came from as far away as Lackland AFB, Texas, and as near as the Patriot Wing's military personnel flight and 42nd and 58th Aerial Port Squadrons.

"We couldn't do it without them," Bleau said. "They have been a tremendous help."

On top of everything else with the surge, the LSS transportation section attends to other reservists' needs. If someone has to take emergency leave and get to an airport, they'll take them there, whether it is nearby Bradley International Airport, Conn., or Boston's Logan International.

Dube added to Bleau's words of appreciation for the efforts of the augmentees. "I'd like to thank them – and their respective units," she said. "We've become a team focused on mission accomplishment."

Pat Stats

Served since February 2, 2003

2,599 passengers

438 aircraft

8,856,403 pounds of cargo

Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

Box Lunches

1,959 hot meals served

690 to duty personnel

1,894 to flight passengers

Info from TSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel (since Feb. 1)

3,475,079 gallons of JP-8

info from Jim Maloney, fuels

PATRIOT *express*

Contact us:

DSN:589-2020 - (413) 557-2020

www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

439patriot.editor@westover.af.mil

This publication is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs office of the 439th Airlift Wing. Call Ext. 2020 with comments, story ideas, or for additional copies. Contents of PATRIOT EXPRESS are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. PATRIOT EXPRESS will be published twice weekly.

We're the C-5 capital of world

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

For at least one day, Westover was the biggest C-5 strategic air base in the world. Only Charleston AFB, S.C. with C-17s and KC-10s, had more strategic aircraft.

Last Tuesday morning there were 24 C-5 Galaxies lined up on the Westover flightline. Not only was that more C-5s than at any base in the U.S., but it was the second time in a week we broke a record for Galaxies on the ground.

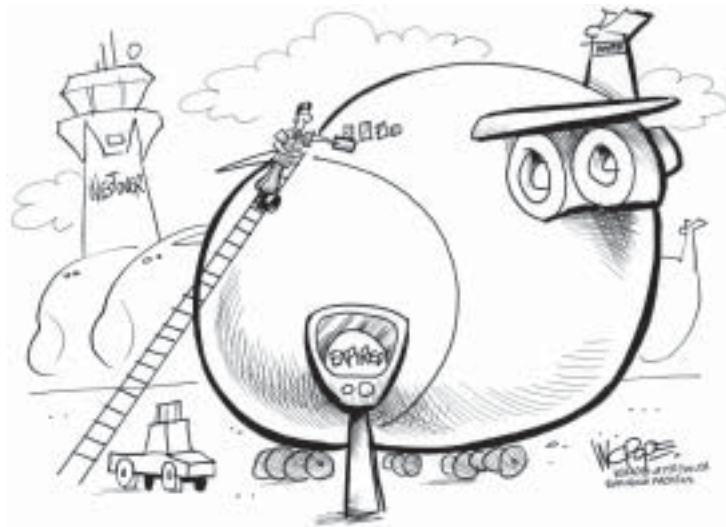
The previous record for C-5s here was last Friday when 21 of the strategic airlifters were on the ground. That day, bad weather at Dover AFB diverted aircraft.

The 24 Galaxies represented almost one in

five of all the 123 C-5s in the Air Force. They were from Stewart, Dover, Lackland and Travis. That is every operational C-5 base in the country. The only other C-5 base is Altus AFB, Okla., which has a training mission.

"It certainly kept us busy from both the passenger and fleet service sides of the house. Our aerial porters were kept hopping," said Lt. Col. James Carey, 42nd APS commander.

"The size of this operation is a tribute to the professionalism and enthusiasm of those who make it work. I consider Westover a benchmark for its ability to generate aircraft," said Col. Thomas Mauzaka, assistant to the wing commander.



Soldiers get "while you wait" service

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

A military haircut is just a haircut, but free haircuts for all the troops in the Passenger Terminal meant something a lot more than a trim to soldiers going overseas last Saturday.

Pioneer Valley USO volunteers Susan Austin and Gay Fleury did what they do best when they showed up at the Passenger Terminal with their clippers, scissors and combs. Susan owns Hairport in Westfield and Gay is owner of Cut 'n Curl in Springfield.

In the hangar, they looked for the best lit spot, set up two metal chairs and got an extension cord and power strip to hook up their clippers. The word quickly got around and lined up in front of their chairs was a row of soldiers wearing Enduring Freedom desert camouflage.

For four hours Susan and Gay cut hair for the soldiers. At the end of the day, 75 troops had fresh haircuts. Better than the haircuts were the sentiments behind the gift.

The two professional hair stylists had worked all week at their shops, but on their day off they came to the Westover Passenger Terminal to send a message of support in the best way they knew how to do.

Susan and Gay are long-time USO volunteers who were part of the red carpet

welcome home celebrations that were conducted for weeks at the end of the Gulf War.

Their recent gifts of free haircuts were a welcome boost for troops who had been in the hangar for several days.

While they were here the soldiers had other experiences of Westover hospitality. After one delay kept them in the hangar, SSgt. Al Nothe of Services opened the Westover Gym for them at 4 a.m. to give everyone a chance to shower.

When the soldiers said they were tired of flight meals, Sandy Wakefield and Marilyn Spofford of the USO took a number of them on a supermarket shopping trip to buy soft drinks and snacks for their flight. The soldiers left Westover late Saturday afternoon.

"When they left, one of them hugged me and said 'Thanks, Mom'. That's when I lost it," Marilyn said. "They were a special bunch of guys. I got too attached," she said.

A few days after the soldiers left, Sandy received a call from one of their mothers in California. She said that her son had reached his destination, called home and described how well he had been treated at Westover. The mother called to express appreciation for taking care of her son. "Westover rocks," the young soldier told his mother.